

REMARKS

The office action of May 3, 2006, has been carefully considered.

It is noted that claim 4 is objected to for not containing informalities.

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over the patent to Taudt.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Taudt in view of the patent to Scobie et al.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Taudt in view of the patent to Kieper.

In view of the Examiner's objection to and rejections of the claims, applicant has amended claims 1 and 4.

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Applicant has amended claim 4 to address the informalities pointed out by the Examiner. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the objection to claim 4 is overcome and should be withdrawn.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims now on file particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has amended the claims to address the instances of indefiniteness cited by the Examiner.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph is overcome and should be withdrawn.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims presently on file differ essentially and in an unobvious, highly advantageous manner from the constructions disclosed in the references.

Turning now to the references and particularly to the patent to Taudt, it can be seen that this patent discloses a radial sealing ring and method for producing it. Taudt does not disclose a bottom drain valve in which the upper part of the sealing module is arranged between the conical taper and the neck portion, and

the upper part is provided with the reinforced, elastically/plastically deformable ring-shaped sealing area, as in the presently claimed invention. Although Taudt shows a tapered portion, there is no upper part of a sealing module arranged for providing a seal between the conical taper and the ring-shaped necked section.

In particular, the sealing element shown by Taudt is only provided between two surfaces 6 and 7 which are extending in the same distance relative to each other. In particular the two surfaces are not able to provide pressure on the sealing element. The radial pressure for providing the sealing in Taudt is only provided by deformation of the undulated spring steel element inside the seal, whereas in the present invention the deformation of the seal is obtained by exerting radial pressure on the upper part of the sealing module by the conical taper.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over the above-discussed reference is overcome and should be withdrawn.

The patent to Scobie et al. discloses a valve seat. Scobie et al. do not provide a radial seal between a ring-shaped necked

section and a conical taper, in particular not a radial seal by squeezing the upper part of a sealing module between a ring shaped necked section and a conical taper.

Scobie et al. only teach use of strands 76 to support the inner sealing section 60a and to keep the inner sealing section 60a in abutment with the fluid control disc 22 when the fluid control disc 22 contacts the inner sealing section 68. However, the strands 76 give no support for providing a sealing connection with the portion 82 or the portion 12 of Scobie et al.

In particular, Scobie et al. do not even teach folding a thin-walled material around the strands 76 because the inner sealing section 60a is not folding around the strands 76.

The Examiner combined Scobie et al. with Taudt in determining that claim 2 would be unpatentable over such a combination. Applicant respectfully submits that neither of these references, nor their combination, teach a bottom drain valve having the features discussed above, as in the presently claimed invention.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over a

combination of the above-discussed references is overcome and should be withdrawn.

The patent to Kieper discloses a vented ball valve with a lock-out ring.

The Examiner combined Kieper with Taudt in determining that claim 4 would be unpatentable over such a combination. Applicant respectfully submits that neither of these references, nor their combination, teach a bottom drain valve having the features discussed above, as in the presently claimed invention.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over a combination of the above-discussed references is overcome and should be withdrawn.

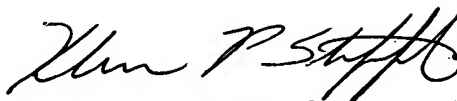
Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with this application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 11-1835.

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Respectfully submitted,

By



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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on August 3, 2006.

By:

  
Klaus P. Stoffel

Date: August 3, 2006